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ACTION SIL-00

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-17 AGRE-00 AID-01 AMAD-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 C-01 DODE-00 EAP-01 EB-01 EXIM-06 E-01
FRB-03 HA-09 H-01 INRE-00 INR-01 IO-19 ITC-01
JUSE-00 LAB-04 L-03 ADS-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02
OMB-01 OPIC-08 PA-01 PRS-01 P-01 RP-10 SNP-00
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O 281134Z OCT 92
FM AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9535
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY
US CUSTOMS SERVICE
AMCONSUL SHENYANG
AMCONSUL SHANGHAI
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE IM/IPS/CR/IR Date: 3/14/97
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FRAUD (FAR EAST)

BEIJING PLEASE PASS CHENGDU

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, ETRD, PHUM, CH, US
SUBJECT: PRISON LABOR - "YINGDE TEA" NOT NECESSARILY
TAINTED; CONVERSATION WITH ONE YINGDE AREA TEA FARMER

REF: (A) GUANGZHOU 2840
(B) 91 GUANGZHOU 7842
(C) 91 GUANGZHOU 7681 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. COMMENTS BY AN YINGDE AREA TEA FARMER
ARE CONSISTENT WITH CONSULATE'S OBSERVATIONS AND
CONCLUSIONS REPORTED FARJER. IN PARTICULAR

A) OF THE NUMEROUS TEA PLANTATIONS IN NORTHERN GUANGDONG'S YINGDE AREA, ONLY THE "RED STAR TEA FARM" IS A LABOR REFORM BUREAU CAMP; B) "YINGDE BLACK TEA" IS GROWN FOR DOMESTIC AND EXPORT SALE MOSTLY BY RESETTLED OVERSEAS CHINESE FROM VIETNAM; C) THE OVERSEAS CHINESE FARMS AND THE MUCH SMALLER RED STAR LABOR REFORM BUREAU FARM ARE EASILY CONFUSED; AND D) RED STAR'S PRODUCT IS GROWN FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTELS REPORTED IN DETAIL ON CONSULATE OFFICER'S VISIT, ACCOMPANIED BY HONG KONG SCR, TO THE YINGHONG OVERSEAS CHINESE TEA FARM IN NORTHERN GUANGDONG'S YINGDE AREA (REF B), CONOFF'S VISIT TO GUANGDONG'S TEA IMPORT EXPORT PROCESSING PLANT WHERE
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YINGDE TEA IS PACKAGED FOR EXPORT AND DOMESTIC SALE (REF B), CONOFF'S MEETINGS WITH OFFICIALS OF CHINA NATIONAL NATIVE PRODUCE AND ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION'S GUANGDONG TEA BRANCH (REF C), AND CONOFF'S VISIT TO THE "RED STAR TEA FARM" (REF A).

3. ON OCTOBER 27, POLITICAL OFFICER SPOKE [REDACTED] IN YINGDE. (CONSULATE'S NIV UNIT NOTICED [REDACTED] IS SIMILAR TO ONE ON CONSULATE'S "PRISON LABOR WATCH LIST.")

4. [REDACTED] CONFIRMED [REDACTED] WORK UNIT IS ONE OF SEVERAL OVERSEAS CHINESE TEA FARMS IN THE YINGDE AREA. WHEN FIRST QUESTIONED ABOUT THE "RED STAR (HONGXING) TEA FARM" [REDACTED] SAYING, "IT'S THE SAME."

5. FURTHER CONVERSATION REVEALED [REDACTED] REGARDED ALL YINGDE AREA TEA PLANTATIONS AS RELATED AND ALTHOUGH YINGHONG AND RED STAR GROW SIMILAR PRODUCTS IN THE SAME AREA, THEY DO NOT SHARE TEA FIELDS OR PACKAGING FACILITIES.

6. [REDACTED] YINGHONG'S "YINGDE BLACK TEA" IS PRODUCED FOR BOTH DOMESTIC AND EXPORT MARKETS. [REDACTED] IDENTIFIED ONE EXPORT QUALITY SAMPLE (AN ATTRACTIVE BOX WITH "YINGDE BLACK TEA" IN ENGLISH AND, IN CHINESE, YINGHONG OVERSEAS TEA FARM - OBTAINED BY CONSULATE DURING VISIT REPORTED REF B) AS [REDACTED] PRODUCT, AND RECOGNIZED TWO DOMESTIC

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MARKET SAMPLES (PACKED IN INFERIOR QUALITY CLEAR
PLASTIC BAGS - ALSO DESCRIBED REF B) OF "YINGDE
BLACK TEA" ONE PRODUCED BY YINGHONG OVERSEAS TEA
FARM AND THE OTHER PRODUCED BY RED STAR.

7. [REDACTED] STATED, "RED STAR DOES NOT PRODUCE
FOR EXPORT."

8. [REDACTED] NOT AWARE OF ANY YINGDE AREA FARM KNOWN
SIMPLY AS "YINGDE TEA FARM."

9. COMMENT: OUR CONVERSATION [REDACTED] ILLUSTRATES
THE EASE WITH WHICH CONFUSION REGARDING PRISON-LABOR
TAINTING OF "YINGDE BLACK TEA" HAS ARISEN AND OFFERS
ONE EMPLOYEE'S OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE LACK OF A
COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YINGDE AREA'S
OVERSEAS TEA FARMS AND ITS, PROBABLY, ONLY LABOR

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REFORM CAMP. END COMMENT.

HARTER

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